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Community *notes*

Midnight Madness on Main Street

Main Street, Ellicott City is the place to be for sipping hot cider, listening to Christmas carols, and holiday shopping for Midnight Madness on Friday, December 2. All stores will be open until at least midnight. Restaurants will be offering dinner and drink specials all evening as well.

There will be free parking and a shuttle bus service from 6:00



p.m. to 2:00 a.m. at the George Howard Government Building or the Circuit Courthouse parking lot. Park and ride the free trolley shuttle bus into town. The trolley will make stops at the corner of Hamilton & Main

St (by Tersiguels) as well as Ellicott Mills Drive and Main Street.

There will be no parking permitted on Main Street.

#ShopSmall this holiday season. For more details about Midnight Madness, visit Old Ellicott City's [website](#).

Holiday Mart

Howard County Recreation & Parks invites you to its 44th annual Holiday Mart on Saturday, December 3, 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. at the Gary J. Arthur Community Center (2400 Route 97, Cooksville). Shop for unique handcrafted items presented by 140 crafters. Activities include door prizes, a children's craft corner, horse and carriage rides, coat and package check, food for purchase and a shuttle service running to and from Bushy Park Elementary School. For more information, visit the [website](#) or call 410-313-4844.

Greetings

Tis the season for family-friendly events in the County and throughout the region. This newsletter includes some opportunities to celebrate the magic of the holidays and to come together as a community in support of one another.

Maury Kay

Community Conversation This Saturday

Howard County Government will conduct a community forum on Saturday, December 3, 2:00 – 4:00 p.m. as the first step in a new County initiative, #OneHoward. Designed to promote dialogue and reinforce the county's shared goals of diversity and inclusiveness, #OneHoward, will launch with a conversation with members of the community, representatives from county police, the sheriff's office, schools, religious groups and civic organizations. The goal of #OneHoward is to advance the shared values of County residents while addressing concerns of racism, intolerance and bigotry that have recently surfaced. Saturday's event will take place at the Bain 50+ Center (5470 Ruth Keeton Way, Columbia). #OneHoward will continue with a series of community conversations and educational events in the future. Click [here](#) to register for Saturday's forum.

Holiday Tea at Historic Oakland

Visitors are invited to Historic Oakland's beautiful ball room on Sunday, December 4 from 3:00 to 4:30 p.m. for delicious teas and delectable savory and sweet creation's by AllSpice Hospitality's Chef Ben Rubin. Painted Trillium, a three member Celtic band, will be performing traditional Celtic and folk music. Reservations and payment three days in advance required. Reserve your place [online](#).



Christmas in the Park

The Department of Recreation and Parks invites you to



Centennial Park South (10000 Route 108, Ellicott City) on Tuesday, December 6, from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. for a tree lighting ceremony, caroling with the Howard High School Chamber Choir, hot chocolate and a special

visit from Santa Claus and other seasonal holiday characters. All are welcome to join the festivities.

"A Christmas Carol: A Live Radio Play"

Howard Community College's (HCC) Arts Collective continues its 22nd season with "A Christmas Carol: A Live Radio Play", adapted for the stage by Joe Landry, with music by Kevin Connors, from the novella by Charles Dickens. The production takes place Thursday, December 8 through Sunday, December 11 in the Horowitz Visual and Performing Arts Center's Studio Theatre. There will be a post-show discussion following the Sunday, December 11 performance. Parental guidance note: No one under 8 years of age will be admitted to the show. Audience members are encouraged to bring items for HCC's Food Pantry. Those who contribute to the pantry will receive a tasty intermission treat from the Arts Collective. Tickets are \$15.00 for general admission and \$10.00 for students, seniors, faculty, staff, and military. For tickets, visit the box office's [website](#) or call 443-518-1500. The box office is open 90 minutes prior to each show time and Tuesday to Friday from 12:00 to 6:00 p.m.

Ash Tree Removal

Due to the emerald ash borer infestation, Howard County's Department of Public Works is removing ash trees along various county-owned roadways throughout Clarksville, Columbia, Ellicott City, Glenelg and Jessup beginning late fall/early winter. Weather permitting, the trees will be removed by the end of winter, and Public Works will have the trees replaced by next spring or fall. The county will not remove any trees located on private property.



The [emerald ash borer](#) is an invasive insect that can cause significant damage and death to ash trees. Signs of an infestation include death of branches at the treetops, discolored leaves, water sprouts and D-shaped holes in the bark where the larvae emerge. Residents who spot signs of infestation on their ash trees are asked to contact Maryland Department of Agriculture at 410-841-5920. For questions about the ash tree removal, contact Public Works Customer Service at 410-313-3440 or via [email](#). For a list of roads with planned tree removals, please see the County [website](#).

Citizens' Budget Hearing

The County Executive hosts a Citizens' Budget Hearing for the FY2018 budget cycle on Wednesday, December 14 at 7:00 p.m. in the Banneker Room of the George Howard Building (3430 Court House Drive, Ellicott City). Beginning on November 30, residents of Howard County are able to sign up [online](#) to speak at the hearing. You may submit budget testimony online; your testimony is considered public information and is subject to the Maryland Public Information Act. Additionally, you may sign up the evening of the public hearing starting at 6:00 p.m.

Holiday Safety Tips

The Howard County Police Department offers the following [advise](#) for staying safe and preventing thefts during the holiday season:

- When shopping, travel with a group or in pairs, and schedule shopping trips during the day.
- Stay alert, especially when carrying packages or walking in a parking lot or a garage.
- Avoid carrying too many packages, and leave one hand free to access keys or a phone quickly.
- Park in a well-lit parking space, and select an area where there are other cars and foot traffic.
- Don't leave cell phones, purses or other valuables in a parked car – especially in plain view.
- When loading packages into the car, use the trunk instead of the back seat.
- Beware of strangers approaching you unsolicited. If you feel uncomfortable, walk in another direction.
- When the holidays are over, don't put boxes for electronics or valuables in plain view on recycling day.

Police are also focused on preventing package thefts as deliveries of online purchases increase this time of year. The department asks residents to review their holiday purchases and shipments to determine if any packages are missing. If so, report the incident to police at 410-313-2200. To prevent thefts, police encourage residents to follow these tips:

- Track shipments and try to be home when they are scheduled to arrive. If you won't be home, have the shipment delivered to your work if permitted or ask the delivery company to leave the package in a discreet location.
- Ask a neighbor to take the package inside until you get home.

Blessings in a Backpack

Blessings in a Backpack is a non-profit organization that works to support elementary school students who are at-risk for hunger. Each Friday during the school year, students supported by the program are given supplemental food to ensure that they do not go hungry over the weekend. During this holiday season, as we remember how thankful we are for what we have, Blessings in a Backpack asks residents to consider contributing to those who are less fortunate. Donations can be made [online](#) or by check. Please contact [Jane Hartlove](#) for more information.



Head Start Seeks Volunteers

Head Start requests help from our caring residents on Tuesday, December 6 to assist with their Eat, Play, Grow Evening Event. Your time will be used to get Head Start children and their families to come together and learn about healthy living and an active lifestyle. This is a great event to get local parents involved in making healthy choices. This event takes place from 6:00 to 8:30 p.m. at the First Presbyterian Head Start Center (9325 Presbyterian Circle, Columbia). The volunteers will help with set-up and clean-up, assist with participant sign-in, meal preparation, and/or any physical education or nutrition education activities in which the children and their families will be participating.



Volunteers will be active; please dress comfortably and wear closed toe shoes. The minimum age for this opportunity is 16 years-old, but children from 9-15 years-old are welcome to help if accompanied by a parent/guardian. This is a great volunteer opportunity for families. If you have any questions or wish to sign up, please email [Sarah Schindehette](mailto:Sarah.Schindehette).

Student Exchange Trips to Ghana

The first-ever high school student summer exchange between the community of Columbia, Maryland, and its sister city of Tema, Ghana, takes place in 2017. Interested teens and their parents are invited to learn more at one of three information sessions hosted by Columbia Association (CA).



The sessions are scheduled for 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. on Monday, December 5; Tuesday, December 13; and Wednesday, January 4, all at CA Headquarters (6310

Hillside Court) located off Stevens Forest Road near the county vehicle emissions inspection station. At each information session, Laura Smit (program manager for CA's International Exchange and Multicultural Programs) and several members of the Tema Sister City Committee, who are familiar with Ghana and Ghanaian culture, will speak and answer questions about the month-long exchange program. Applications are due Friday, February 17, 2017. For more information, visit CA's [website](http://www.columbiaassociation.org).

Apply to Join the Human Rights Commission

The Howard County Human Rights Commission is seeking a new commissioner. Interested applicants should send a resume and letter of interest to David Lee via [email](mailto:David.Lee@howardcountymd.gov) or by mail (Howard County Government, Office of the County Executive, Attn: David Lee, 3430 Court House Drive, Ellicott City, MD 21043). The deadline to apply is Friday, December 30 at 5:00 p.m.

Upcoming Events

Arts Council Open House Holiday Sale

Friday, December 2, 5:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Howard County Arts Council

8510 High Ridge Road, Ellicott City, MD 21043

Local artists at the [Open House](#) offer unique and affordable art and handcrafted items for sale including jewelry, accessories, paintings, glass art, fiber art, and greeting cards.

Lunch with Santa

Saturday, December 3, 11:30 a.m.

Slayton House, Wilde Lake Community Center

10400 Cross Fox Lane, Columbia, MD 21044

Includes lunch, photo with Santa and the Secret Shop. Tickets are \$5.00 per person. For information, call 410-730-3987.

United States Navy Band Concert

Saturday, December 3, 7:00 p.m.

River Hill High School

12101 Clarksville Pike, Clarksville, MD 21029

The United States Navy Band performs a free concert featuring marches, holiday tunes, and a traditional wind band repertoire. For more information, [email](#) or call 410-313-6927.

CPR Training

Howard County Fire and Rescue Services offers next classes for CPR training are on Wednesdays from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

- Wednesday, December 7 at the Public Safety Training Center, 2200 Scott Wheeler Drive, Marriottsville
- Wednesday, December 14 at the Gateway Building 6751 Columbia Gateway Drive, Classroom 401, Columbia

Participants may [register](#) online. Additional information is available via [email](#) or phone (410-313-2016).

DIY Cookie Cutter Workshop

Saturday, December 10, 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Maryland Science Center

601 Light Street, Baltimore, MD 21230

Make your own designs as you learn about metal bending and shaping. All participants leave with their very own food-safe creation to try at home. Advance [registration](#) is required.



Mary Kay Sigaty

mksigaty@howardcountymd.gov

Twitter: [@MaryKaySigaty](https://twitter.com/MaryKaySigaty)

Facebook: facebook.com/MaryKaySigaty

Howard County Council

3430 Courthouse Drive

Ellicott City, MD 21043

(410) 313-2001

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